

## FORM 1

### **Documentation of BLM Wilderness Characteristics Inventory Findings from Previous Inventory on Record**

**1. Is there existing BLM wilderness characteristics inventory information on all or part of this area?**

No (Go to Form 2) Yes   X  

**a) Inventory Source:** The area in question (Upper Indian Creek) was evaluated as part of the Initial Wilderness Inventory in 1979. The area was found to be unnatural due to 0.5 miles of road, some evidence of past minerals activities and range improvements, especially fences. The area was not recommended for intensive inventory.

As part of its 2008 RMP effort, Monticello BLM reexamined all areas then proposed by external groups for wilderness. Upper Indian Creek was not proposed for wilderness internally or externally during scoping for the RMP effort. Similarly, the area had not been proposed for wilderness leading up to the earlier 1999 Utah Wilderness Inventory. For these reasons, the area was not re-examined for wilderness characteristics as part of the 2008 RMP effort.

In response to a proposal to grant San Juan County a right-of-way for an ATV trail, SUWA presented the Monticello BLM with new information on the Upper Indian Creek area, and asked the BLM to reexamine the area for wilderness characteristics. At the time of the initial submission, BLM lacked specific guidance on evaluating wilderness characteristics other than IM-275-Change 1 (based on the Norton-Leavitt agreement of 2003), and the Wild Lands Directive from Secretary Salazar. This Directive was never implemented by BLM, as Congressional legislation barred BLM from expending funds for such implementation. In March, 2012, BLM issued Manual 6310, *Conducting Wilderness Characteristics Inventory on BLM Lands*. The current inventory is based on the policies and procedures outlined in Manual 6310.

In response to the new information provided by SUWA, BLM Monticello FO staff undertook a wilderness characteristics inventory of the Upper Indian Creek area in April, 2012. As pointed out later both by SUWA and the Utah BLM State Office, the inventory team did not properly apply the guidance contained in Manual 6310, which had been issued just one month earlier. As a result, the Monticello wilderness inventory team determined that the area lacked wilderness characteristics, basing their conclusions primarily on the presence of range fences bisecting the unit. The finding of lack of wilderness characteristics was then signed by the Monticello Field Office manager in August, 2012.

The shortcomings of the April 2012, inventory led the BLM to undertake another inventory of Upper Indian Creek, utilizing the guidelines of Manual 6310. Using a map provided by the proponent (paper and shapefile), BLM personnel revisited the area on

three occasions from December, 2012, through early March, 2013. The results of this inventory, along with supporting documentation, follow.

**b) Inventory Area Unique Identifier(s):** UT-060-163 (from initial inventory)

**c) Map Name(s)/Number(s):** Upper Indian Creek Wilderness Characteristics Review-Maps  
A-E

**d) BLM District(s)/Field Office(s):** Canyon Country District/Monticello Field Office

**2. BLM Inventory Findings on Record:** see discussion under 1 (a), above

**FORM 2: Current Conditions: Presence or Absence of Wilderness Characteristics**

Area Unique Identifier UT-060-163 Acreage 6350 (If the inventory area consists of subunits, list the acreage of each and evaluate each separately). In completing steps (1)-(5), use additional space as necessary.

(1) Is the area of sufficient size? (If the area meets one of the exceptions to the size criterion, check "Yes" and describe the exception in the space provided below),

Yes X No    

Description: The starting point for the acreage considered for wilderness characteristics inventory consisted of the map and shapefile provided by SUWA. This acreage excluded several "cherry-stems" to account for several travel routes (UIC-1,2,3,5), a developed campground, a fence line and several exclusions along boundary routes (including along the aforementioned cherry-stem routes) to exclude roadside impacts to naturalness. The current BLM inventory also excluded those areas which were not in the SUWA proposal. Additionally, the SUWA proposal includes state lands within and adjacent to BLM lands. Since BLM cannot manage non-BLM lands for any resource, including wilderness characteristics, these state lands have been excluded from the analysis.

Based on the three field trips undertaken by the BLM, additional acreage was removed from the acreage asserted to possess wilderness characteristics. These exclusions are justified by impacts, primarily from past and present OHV activity, that render certain areas unnatural in appearance to the average observer. These exclusions are:

A. The Creek Pasture Campground exclusion was expanded slightly to include the actual constructed footprint of the campground.

B. An RMP-designated travel route (UIC-4), plus an associated designated camp area, was cherry-stemmed to eliminate impacts to naturalness.

C. An area along UIC-3 and north of UIC-4, which had been cherry-stemmed by SUWA to eliminate impacts to naturalness from OHV and camping activity, was expanded to capture current impacts to naturalness.

D. A route (UIC-6) signed as open on the ground, but not on the RMP travel plan, was cherry-stemmed as constituting a significant impact on naturalness, and one unlikely to disappear very quickly, even if closed to travel. A disturbed area at the end of this route was also cherry-stemmed to eliminate impacts from OHV and camping activity.

E. Several spurs off cherry-stemmed routes in this area of the unit, although findable on the ground, were judged to be insignificant impacts on naturalness. These include UIC-7, 8, 9, and 10. Cherry-stem UIC-5 was expanded a short distance to eliminate additional impacts where the route crosses the wash. The presence of two gates at range fences at

the end of the original SUWA cherry-stem may indicate a mapping error in the RMP travel plan, as the current GIS-mapped route ends at a difficult turn-around point, with the two gates being a short distance further.

F. A disturbed and signed camping area north of UIC-3 and along the boundary road was excluded due to lack of naturalness.

G. A very small area just south of UIC-11 was excluded due to the presence of a constructed vault toilet.

H. UIC-11 is a constructed and improved route leading to a large camping area. This area contains many spurs, some closed but others remaining open. The overall impacts to this long-used area are unlikely to heal anytime soon, and are excluded due to loss of naturalness.

I. UIC-12 is a short but very visible route leading from state lands on the north to several well-used camp sites. Although not designated in the RMP travel plan, the loss of naturalness is substantial enough to warrant cherry-stemming.

(2) Does the area appear to be natural?

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_ N/A\_\_\_\_\_ (after exclusions described in Part 1, above)

(3) Does the area (or the remainder of the area if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remainder is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for solitude?

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_ N/A\_\_\_\_\_

(4) Does the area (or the remainder of the area if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remainder is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation?

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_ N/A\_\_\_\_\_

(5) Does the area have supplemental values (ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical value)?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No X N/A\_\_\_\_\_

## Summary of Analysis

Area Unique Identifier: UT-060-163

### Summary

Results of analysis: See discussion under 1 (a) in Form 1

1. Does the area meet any of the size requirements? X Yes \_\_\_ No
2. Does the area appear to be natural? X Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ N/A \_\_\_\_\_
3. Does the area offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation? X Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ N/A \_\_\_
4. Does the area have supplemental values? X Yes \_\_\_ No X N/A \_\_\_\_\_


### Check one:

X The area, or a portion of the area, has wilderness characteristics and is identified as lands with wilderness characteristics.

\_\_\_ The area does not have wilderness characteristics.

**Prepared by:** William P. Stevens, Outdoor Recreation Planner, Moab BLM, March 14, 2013

**Reviewed by (District or Field Manager):**

 4-26-13  
Dennis C. Teitzel Acting Field Manager

This form documents information that constitutes an inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under either 43 CFR parts 4 or 1610.5-3.

BLM MANUAL Rel. No. 6-129 Supersedes Rel. 6-126 Date: 03/15/2012



# Upper Indian Creek Wilderness Characteristics Review

## Map A: SUWA Proposal and BLM Findings

